



Substance Use Among Male Inmates

Texas Department of Criminal Justice
– Institutional Division

1998

Executive Summary

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By

Lisa Kerber, M.A.



Texas Commission on
Alcohol and Drug Abuse

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Substance Use Among Male Inmates Entering the Texas Department of Criminal Justice—Institutional Division: 1998

In 1998, the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (TCADA), in conjunction with the Public Policy Research Institute at Texas A&M University, conducted a study of substance use and related behaviors among male prisoners in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice—Institutional Division (TDCJ-ID).

Using a simple random sample, data were collected from inmates newly admitted to the four ID intake facilities. Face to face interviews, which took an average of 74 minutes to complete, took place in private administrative offices inside the prisons. The survey instrument covered seven major areas: prevalence of licit and illicit substance use, criminal history, past substance abuse treatment and current motivation for treatment, family and peer relations, physical and mental health, gambling behaviors, and demographics. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the sample.

Prevalence of Substance Use

Licit Substances

Tobacco

- Eighty-nine percent of inmates reported smoking cigarettes at least once during their lives. Seventy-one percent of all inmates had smoked cigarettes in the past year; 54 percent had smoked cigarettes in the past month (Appendix A1).
- Twenty-three percent reported ever using smokeless tobacco; 15 percent of inmates had used smokeless tobacco in the past year.

Alcohol

- Almost all inmates (96 percent) reported ever drinking alcohol; 41 percent had drunk alcohol in the month before their arrest (Appendix A1).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Male TDCJ-ID Inmate Sample: 1998

	n	%*
Total	782	100.0%
Race/Ethnicity		
African American	272	34.8%
Anglo	253	32.4%
Hispanic	227	29.0%
Age		
17-24	214	27.4%
25-34	265	33.9%
35+	303	38.8%
Education		
Less than high school	555	71.0%
High school or above	226	29.0%
Employment Status		
Working full-time	505	64.6%
Working part-time	128	16.4%
Unemployed	82	10.5%
Other	49	6.2%
Annual Household Income		
Under \$10,000	211	27.0%
\$10,000-\$20,000	176	22.5%
\$20,000-\$30,000	113	14.5%
\$30,000+	152	19.5%
Marital Status		
Never married	327	41.8%
Married	239	30.6%
Widowed, separated, divorced	214	27.4%

* Numbers may not add to 100 due to responses of "don't know" or "refuse"

- Twenty-six percent of inmates *binge drank*, defined as having drunk five or more drinks on two or more occasions in the past month.
- Eighteen percent of inmates met the criterion for *heavy alcohol use*, defined as five or more drinks on five or more occasions in the past month.

Inhalants

- Twenty-one percent of inmates had used inhalants at least once during their lives. Less than 1 percent of inmates had used an inhalant in the past month (Appendix A1).
- Eighty-six percent of inmates reported using an illicit drug in their lifetime; 36 percent reported past-month illicit drug use.

Illicit Substances

Marijuana

- Among illicit drugs, marijuana (or hashish) was the most commonly used. Eighty-two percent of inmates had ever used marijuana or hashish. Nineteen percent of all inmates had used marijuana or hashish in the month before incarceration (Appendix A1).
- Forty-eight percent of past-month users said they had smoked marijuana or hashish daily during the past month.
- Thirty-two percent of the past-month marijuana users had smoked fry, a marijuana joint or cigar dipped in embalming fluid or formaldehyde that can contain PCP.

Powder Cocaine

- Powder cocaine was the second most commonly used illicit drug among inmates. Fifty-seven percent had ever used powder cocaine. Eleven percent of inmates had used it during the month before incarceration (Appendix A1).
- Sixteen percent of the past-month users reported using powder cocaine every day during that month.

Crack Cocaine

- Thirty-four percent of inmates had ever used crack cocaine. Nine percent had used it in the past month (Appendix A1).
- Thirty-three percent of past-month users reported using crack cocaine every day during that month.

Downers

- Thirty-eight percent of the inmates had ever used downers. Nine percent had used downers in the past month (Appendix A1).
- Nineteen percent of past-month users reported using them every day in the month before incarceration.

Uppers

- Thirty-six percent of the inmates reported ever using uppers. Seven percent had used uppers in the month before incarceration (Appendix A1).
- Thirty-six percent of past-month users reported daily use of uppers in the past month.

Heroin

- About 18 percent of inmates had ever used heroin. Four percent had used heroin in the past month (Appendix A1).

- Almost half (47 percent) of the past-month users reported using heroin daily in the past month.

Psychedelics

- Forty-two percent of inmates had ever used psychedelics. Even though lifetime prevalence of psychedelic use was relatively high, past-month use was relatively low (4 percent).

Opiates Other than Heroin

- Seventeen percent of inmates had ever used opiates other than heroin. Three percent of inmates had used opiates other than heroin in the past month (Appendix A1).
- Fifty percent of the past-month users reported using opiates every day during the past month.

Treatment Needs

To assess the need for publicly-funded substance abuse treatment services, TCADA uses two criteria: substance abuse or dependence and motivation for treatment.

Substance Abuse and Dependence

Overall, 64 percent of male prisoners had substance use problems. Some 47 percent were dependent on substances and needed treatment at this time. Seventeen percent abused substances and needed intervention or treatment services to prevent their substance abuse from progressing to substance dependence.

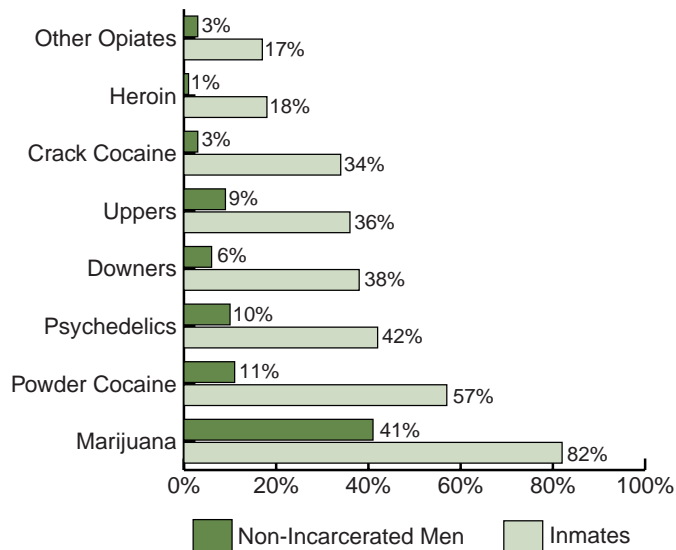
Motivation for Treatment

Because individual motivation is an important factor in how inmates respond to treatment services, it is important to note that 45 percent of inmates who abused or were dependent on substances agreed that they would be “willing to enter treatment as soon as possible.” This percentage represented 29 percent of all inmates.

Medical Indigence

In this study, the term *medically indigent* prisoners refers to inmates without health insurance, a city/county health card, Medicaid coverage, or an annual household legal income of at least \$10,000. Those medically indigent inmates with substance use problems who would be willing to enter treatment as soon as possible represented 24 percent of all male inmates. These inmates would need publicly-funded substance abuse treatment or follow-up care once they were released.

Figure 1. Lifetime Illicit Substance Use Among Male TDCJ-ID Inmates (1998) and Non-Incarcerated Men (1996)



**Comparisons with
Non-incarcerated
Men in Texas
(1996)**

Lifetime Prevalence

- The prevalence of lifetime alcohol use among male inmates and non-incarcerated males of comparable age and race/ethnicity was similar (96 percent and 93 percent respectively). Inmates (89 percent) were slightly more likely than non-incarcerated men (76 percent) to ever smoke cigarettes. The lifetime prevalence of illicit drug use, though, was much higher among inmates (Figure 1).

Abuse and Dependence

- Inmates (46 percent) were almost twice as likely as non-incarcerated men in Texas (25 percent) to abuse or be dependent on alcohol, and they were about six times as likely as non-incarcerated men to abuse or be dependent on other drugs (47 percent vs. 8 percent).

**Factors Related
to Substance
Abuse and
Dependence**

Demographic Factors

- Anglos were more likely than Hispanics and African Americans to abuse or be dependent on substances (Table 2). Inmates aged 25 to 34 were more likely than the youngest and oldest inmates to abuse or be dependent. Unemployed and under employed inmates were more likely than other inmates to abuse or be dependent on substances. Inmates with an annual household income of less than \$20,000 were more likely than other inmates to have substance use problems. Veterans were more likely than inmates who had not served in the armed forces to abuse or be dependent on substances. Currently married inmates were less likely than never married or previously married inmates to have substance use problems.

Table 2. Percentage of Male TDCJ-ID Inmates Who Abused or Were Dependent on Substances, by Selected Demographic Factors: 1998

Race/Ethnicity	
Anglo	73.9%
African American	58.1%
Hispanic	59.7%
Age	
17-24	63.1%
25-34	69.1%
35+	59.1%
Education	
Less than high school	63.4%
High school or above	63.9%
Employment Status	
Working full-time	60.6%
Working part-time	69.5%
Unemployed	72.0%
Other	61.2%
Annual Legal Household Income	
Under \$10,000	68.5%
\$10,000-\$20,000	65.3%
\$20,000-\$30,000	57.5%
\$30,000+	59.9%
Marital Status	
Never married	63.6%
Married	56.5%
Widowed, separated, divorced	71.5%
Ever Served in Armed Forces	
No	59.8%
Yes	64.1%

Violence and Victimization

- Inmates who abused or were dependent on substances were more likely than other inmates to have suffered neglect and abuse as children (Figure 2) or as adults (Figure 3).

Mental Health

- Forty-two percent of all inmates said that a mental health problem had significantly interfered with their lives at one time. Inmates with substance problems (49 percent) were more likely than other inmates (30 percent) to say that a mental health problem had interfered with their lives.
- Table 3 shows the percentage of male inmates who had ever sought or received mental health services. Inmates with substance problems were more likely than other inmates to seek treatment,

receive diagnoses, and take medication for a mental health problem.

HIV Risk

- Forty-seven percent of all male inmates were at risk for contracting HIV because they had ever injected drugs and/or engaged in at least one of the six high-risk sexual behaviors in the month before incarceration (Table 4). Inmates who were dependent on substances were more likely than other inmates to be at risk for HIV, both because of their substance use and their sexual behavior.

Children

- Sixty-one percent of the inmates had children younger than 18. Fifty-two percent of the inmates who had dependent children were living with them at the time of arrest. Among inmates with dependent children, those with substance problems were less likely than other inmates to live with them.

Gambling

- Twenty-three percent of all inmates reported having any of the gambling problems asked about in the survey. Those who did not have a substance use problem (16 percent) were the least likely to have a gambling problem.

Figure 2. Percentage of Male TDCJ-ID Inmates Who Suffered Neglect and Abuse During Childhood, by Substance Abuse/Dependence: 1998

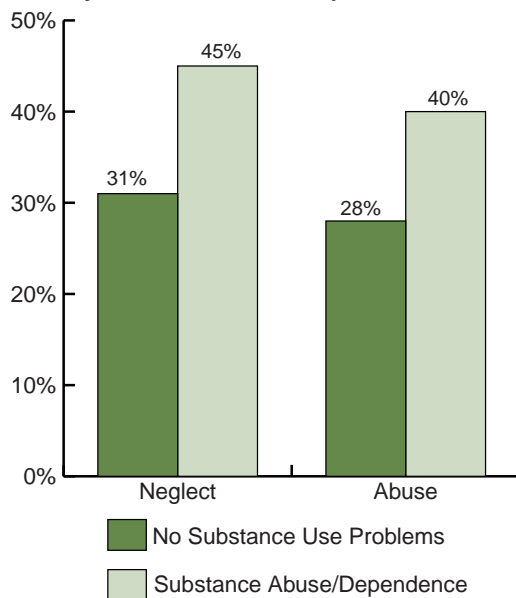


Figure 3. Percentage of Male TDCJ-ID Inmates Who Suffered Neglect and Abuse During Adulthood, by Substance Abuse/Dependence: 1998

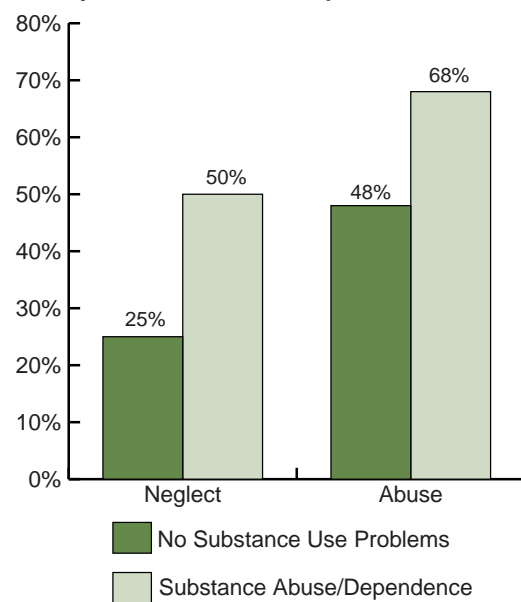


Table 3. Percentage of Male TDCJ-ID Inmates Who Had Ever Sought or Received Mental Health Services, by Substance Abuse/Dependence: 1998

	Total	Substance Abuse/Dependence	
		No	Yes
Sought Mental Health Treatment	24.6%	19.3%	27.7%
Given Diagnosis by MH Professional	12.4%	8.6%	14.9%
Taken Medication for MH Problem	9.5%	5.6%	11.7%
Hospitalized for MH Problem	4.6%	3.2%	5.4%

Table 4. HIV Risk Among Male TDCJ-ID Inmates, by Substance Dependence: 1998

	Total	Substance Dependence	
		No	Yes
At Risk for HIV	47.1%	31.6%	64.8%
As a Result of Taking Sexual Risks in Past Month	31.6%	23.0%	41.5%
As a Result of IV Drug Use in Lifetime	26.2%	13.4%	40.9%

- Inmates were asked to report crimes they had committed regardless of whether they were caught or arrested. Appendix B1 shows the prevalence and recency of these crimes by age group.

The Role of Substances During Most Recent Crime

- Forty-three percent of inmates said they were drunk or high on some substance when they committed the offense that led to their present sentence. Alcohol was by far the most commonly used substance among the inmates who were intoxicated during the commission of their most recent crime (Table 5).
- Seventy-one percent of the inmates who reported being intoxicated at the time of the offense said they would not have committed the crime if they had not been high or drunk.

Criminal Behavior

Crime and Substance Abuse/Dependence

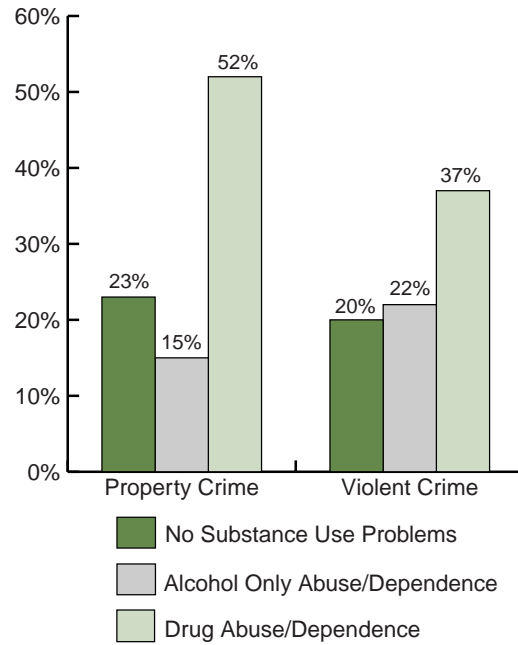
- Inmates who abused or were dependent on drugs or drugs and alcohol in combination were more likely than other inmates to commit a property or violent crime in the past year (Figure 4).
- Among inmates who had previously served time in prison, 30 percent reported that a “very important” factor in returning to prison was their abuse of drugs, and 24 percent said that a “very important” factor in returning to prison was their abuse

of alcohol. When asked to state the most important single reason for their return to prison, 29 percent said that it was their drug or drinking habit. Four percent said the most important reason was their selling of drugs.

Table 5. Substances Used by Male TDCJ-ID Inmates Who Admitted Being High or Drunk During Most Recent Crime: 1998

Alcohol	58.9%
Powder or Crack Cocaine	28.6%
Heroin	6.8%
Uppers	6.3%
Psychedelics	3.0%
Downers	2.4%
Marijuana	2.1%
Opiates other than Heroin	0.6%
Inhalants	0.6%

Figure 4. Percentage of Male TDCJ-ID Inmates Who Committed Property or Violent Crime in the Past Year, by Type of Substance Abuse/Dependence: 1998



**Appendix A1. Prevalence and Recency of Substance Use
Among TDCJ-ID Male Inmates, by Age: 1998**

	EVER USED	PAST MONTH	PAST YEAR (not past month)	NOT PAST YEAR	NEVER USED
Cigarettes	88.5%	53.6%	17.0%	17.9%	11.5%
17-24	84.6%	53.3%	15.9%	15.4%	15.4%
25-34	88.3%	55.5%	17.4%	15.5%	11.7%
35 & older	91.4%	52.1%	17.5%	21.8%	8.6%
Alcohol	95.7%	41.2%	30.7%	23.8%	4.3%
17-24	91.6%	35.0%	32.7%	23.8%	8.4%
25-34	98.5%	46.0%	32.5%	20.0%	1.5%
35 & older	96.0%	41.3%	27.7%	27.1%	4.0%
Marijuana	82.2%	19.4%	17.0%	45.8%	17.8%
17-24	84.1%	30.8%	20.6%	32.7%	15.9%
25-34	85.3%	19.6%	22.3%	43.4%	14.7%
35 & older	78.2%	11.2%	9.9%	57.1%	21.8%
Inhalants	20.7%	0.8%	1.8%	18.2%	79.3%
17-24	22.4%	2.3%	2.8%	17.3%	77.6%
25-34	18.5%	-	1.5%	16.6%	81.5%
35 & older	21.5%	-	1.3%	20.2%	78.5%
Cocaine	57.2%	11.3%	12.9%	33.0%	42.8%
17-24	53.3%	15.0%	17.3%	21.0%	46.7%
25-34	57.7%	11.3%	13.2%	33.2%	42.3%
35 & older	59.4%	8.6%	9.6%	41.3%	40.6%
Crack	34.3%	9.1%	9.2%	16.0%	65.7%
17-24	18.2%	1.9%	5.6%	10.7%	81.8%
25-34	40.8%	10.2%	11.3%	19.2%	59.2%
35 & older	39.9%	13.2%	9.9%	16.8%	60.1%
Cocaine or Crack	62.3%	17.3%	16.1%	28.9%	37.7%
17-24	55.1%	15.9%	18.2%	21.0%	44.9%
25-34	67.2%	18.5%	17.0%	31.7%	32.8%
35 & older	63.0%	17.2%	13.9%	32.0%	37.0%
Uppers	36.0%	7.3%	5.4%	23.3%	64.0%
17-24	26.4%	9.4%	5.2%	11.8%	73.6%
25-34	36.2%	8.7%	5.7%	21.9%	63.8%
35 & older	42.6%	4.6%	5.3%	32.7%	57.4%
Downers	37.5%	8.6%	5.6%	23.3%	62.5%
17-24	35.5%	11.2%	9.3%	15.0%	64.5%
25-34	32.8%	8.7%	4.5%	19.6%	67.2%
35 & older	42.9%	6.6%	4.0%	32.3%	57.1%
Heroin	17.6%	4.3%	2.4%	10.9%	82.4%
17-24	8.4%	2.3%	2.3%	3.7%	91.6%
25-34	15.1%	3.8%	2.6%	8.7%	84.9%
35 & older	26.4%	6.3%	2.3%	17.8%	73.6%
Other Opiates	17.4%	3.3%	4.9%	9.2%	82.6%
17-24	18.2%	4.2%	7.9%	6.1%	81.8%
25-34	14.3%	1.9%	3.4%	9.1%	85.7%
35 & older	19.5%	4.0%	4.0%	11.6%	80.5%
Psychedelics	41.8%	3.7%	5.1%	33.0%	58.2%
17-24	40.7%	8.4%	11.7%	20.6%	59.3%
25-34	42.3%	4.2%	5.7%	32.5%	57.7%
35 & older	42.2%	-	-	42.2%	57.8%
Any Illicit Drugs	85.9%	35.9%	20.7%	29.3%	14.1%
17-24	87.9%	44.4%	22.0%	21.5%	12.1%
25-34	88.7%	37.0%	25.7%	26.0%	11.3%
35 & older	82.2%	29.0%	15.5%	37.6%	17.8%

- Less than .5 percent

Appendix B1. Prevalence and Recency of Crime Among TDCJ-ID Male Inmates, by Age: 1998

	EVER COMMITTED	PAST MONTH	PAST YEAR (not past month)	NOT PAST YEAR	NEVER COMMITTED
Burglary	42.8%	4.7%	7.4%	30.6%	57.2%
17-24	53.1%	8.5%	13.6%	31.0%	46.9%
25-34	46.0%	4.5%	6.0%	35.5%	54.0%
35 & older	32.8%	2.3%	4.3%	26.2%	67.2%
Car Theft	24.4%	2.1%	4.0%	18.3%	75.6%
17-24	37.6%	3.8%	9.4%	24.4%	62.4%
25-34	22.3%	2.3%	3.0%	17.0%	77.7%
35 & older	16.9%	0.7%	1.0%	15.2%	83.1%
Auto Parts Theft	12.3%	1.0%	3.0%	8.3%	87.7%
17-24	20.2%	2.3%	5.6%	12.2%	79.8%
25-34	10.6%	1.1%	2.3%	7.2%	89.4%
35 & older	8.3%	-	1.7%	6.6%	91.7%
Shoplifting	37.0%	4.4%	4.9%	27.8%	63.0%
17-24	39.7%	3.7%	6.5%	29.4%	60.3%
25-34	38.1%	4.5%	3.8%	29.8%	61.9%
35 & older	34.1%	4.6%	4.6%	24.8%	65.9%
Forgery or Fraud	22.7%	1.7%	4.7%	16.3%	77.3%
17-24	14.5%	0.9%	4.7%	8.9%	85.5%
25-34	26.0%	2.3%	7.2%	16.6%	74.0%
35 & older	25.5%	1.7%	2.6%	21.2%	74.5%
Pick Pocketing / Purse Snatching	4.7%	0.5%	0.5%	3.7%	95.3%
17-24	7.9%	1.4%	1.4%	5.1%	92.1%
25-34	4.2%	-	-	3.4%	95.8%
35 & older	3.0%	-	-	3.0%	97.0%
Buying Stolen Goods	38.3%	8.2%	11.0%	19.1%	61.7%
17-24	50.5%	12.6%	19.6%	18.2%	49.5%
25-34	40.4%	10.6%	9.1%	20.8%	59.6%
35 & older	27.8%	3.0%	6.6%	18.2%	72.2%
Robbery with No Weapon	13.6%	2.0%	2.8%	8.7%	86.4%
17-24	19.2%	3.7%	6.1%	9.3%	80.8%
25-34	13.6%	1.5%	2.3%	9.8%	86.4%
35 & older	9.6%	1.3%	1.0%	7.3%	90.4%
Robbery with Gun	9.2%	1.2%	2.0%	6.0%	90.8%
17-24	17.3%	3.3%	5.6%	8.4%	82.7%
25-34	5.3%	-	0.8%	4.2%	94.7%
35 & older	7.0%	-	0.7%	6.0%	93.0%
Robbery with Knife	1.8%	-	-	1.3%	98.2%
17-24	3.3%	0.9%	0.5%	1.9%	96.7%
25-34	2.3%	-	-	1.9%	97.7%
35 & older	-	-	-	-	99.7%
Gambling	16.4%	6.9%	4.7%	4.7%	83.6%
17-24	27.1%	17.8%	7.5%	1.9%	72.9%
25-34	15.8%	3.8%	5.7%	6.4%	84.2%
35 & older	9.3%	2.0%	2.0%	5.3%	90.7%
Drug Sales -- Crack Cocaine	26.3%	11.3%	6.4%	8.6%	73.7%
17-24	37.9%	18.2%	8.9%	10.7%	62.1%
25-34	25.4%	11.0%	6.4%	8.0%	74.6%
35 & older	19.0%	6.7%	4.7%	7.7%	81.0%
Drug Sales -- Other Drugs	38.6%	13.8%	7.3%	17.4%	61.4%
17-24	50.9%	25.2%	11.7%	14.0%	49.1%
25-34	38.6%	12.1%	7.6%	18.9%	61.4%
35 & older	29.8%	7.3%	4.0%	18.5%	70.2%

Appendix B1. Prevalence and Recency of Crime Among TDCJ-ID Male Inmates, by Age: 1998 (cont.)

	EVER COMMITTED	PAST MONTH	PAST YEAR (not past month)	NOT PAST YEAR	NEVER COMMITTED
Assault with No Weapon	45.9%	7.4%	11.3%	27.2%	54.1%
17-24	68.2%	18.2%	21.5%	28.5%	31.8%
25-34	50.8%	5.3%	11.7%	33.7%	49.2%
35 & older	25.8%	1.7%	3.6%	20.5%	74.2%
Threat with Knife	8.1%	-	2.6%	5.1%	91.9%
17-24	11.2%	0.9%	4.7%	5.6%	88.8%
25-34	6.4%	-	1.9%	4.2%	93.6%
35 & older	7.3%	-	1.7%	5.6%	92.7%
Threat with Gun	17.9%	2.8%	4.4%	10.8%	82.1%
17-24	28.0%	7.0%	9.3%	11.7%	72.0%
25-34	16.7%	1.9%	4.2%	10.6%	83.3%
35 & older	11.9%	0.7%	1.0%	10.3%	88.1%
Cutting Someone with Knife	8.7%	-	1.9%	6.7%	91.3%
17-24	10.7%	0.5%	2.3%	7.9%	89.3%
25-34	9.1%	-	1.9%	7.2%	90.9%
35 & older	7.0%	-	1.7%	5.3%	93.0%
Shooting at Someone	20.4%	2.0%	4.9%	13.5%	79.6%
17-24	34.1%	6.1%	10.3%	17.8%	65.9%
25-34	17.4%	0.8%	4.5%	12.1%	82.6%
35 & older	13.2%	-	1.3%	11.6%	86.8%
Carrying Gun on Person	44.8%	13.6%	9.5%	21.8%	55.2%
17-24	59.3%	23.4%	15.9%	20.1%	40.7%
25-34	44.5%	13.6%	11.3%	19.6%	55.5%
35 & older	34.8%	6.6%	3.3%	24.8%	65.2%
Serious Injury or Murder	17.7%	1.4%	4.9%	11.4%	82.3%
17-24	25.4%	3.3%	8.5%	13.6%	74.6%
25-34	18.1%	1.5%	5.4%	11.2%	81.9%
35 & older	12.0%	-	2.0%	10.0%	88.0%
Sexual Assault or Rape	4.1%	-	0.9%	3.1%	95.9%
17-24	1.4%	-	-	1.4%	98.6%
25-34	3.4%	-	0.8%	2.7%	96.6%
35 & older	6.7%	-	1.7%	4.7%	93.3%
Prostitution	1.9%	0.5%	0.8%	0.6%	98.1%
17-24	1.9%	-	0.9%	0.9%	98.1%
25-34	3.0%	1.5%	1.1%	-	97.0%
35 & older	1.0%	-	-	0.7%	99.0%
Procurring	6.0%	2.0%	1.5%	2.4%	94.0%
17-24	6.1%	2.8%	2.3%	0.9%	93.9%
25-34	5.7%	1.9%	1.5%	2.3%	94.3%
35 & older	6.3%	1.7%	1.0%	3.6%	93.7%
Vandalism	27.3%	3.3%	5.4%	18.6%	72.7%
17-24	40.2%	8.4%	11.7%	20.1%	59.8%
25-34	29.8%	1.9%	5.3%	22.6%	70.2%
35 & older	15.9%	1.0%	1.0%	13.9%	84.1%
Stealing from Employer	13.2%	1.3%	2.4%	9.5%	86.8%
17-24	9.3%	0.9%	2.3%	6.1%	90.7%
25-34	14.0%	1.9%	3.0%	9.1%	86.0%
35 & older	15.2%	1.0%	2.0%	12.3%	84.8%
Other Crime Not Mentioned	4.5%	1.7%	0.6%	2.2%	95.5%
17-24	5.1%	0.9%	0.9%	3.3%	94.9%
25-34	4.9%	2.6%	-	1.9%	95.1%
35 & older	3.6%	1.3%	0.7%	1.7%	96.4%

- Less than .5 percent



U.S. DEPARTMENT HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment

*Substance Abuse and Mental
Health Services Administration*
SAMHSA

CSAT
Center for Substance
Abuse Treatment